

Winter Transportation Committee
June 8, 2015

Members present: Jim Patterson, Town Board Supervisor; David Aslyn, Superintendent, Bayfield School District; Steve Dunn, Maintenance Operations Supervisor, Bayfield School District; Gary Krubsack, Citizen at Large and Gary Russell, Manager, Madeline Island Ferry Lines.

Members absent:

Ex-Officio present: Arnie Nelson, Windsled Transportation, Inc and Madeline Island Transportation, Inc.

Town Staff present: Lisa Potswald, Planning and Zoning Administrator, Interim Town Administrator and Grant Writer, Rick Reichkitzer, Fire Chief; and Jay Wiltz, Head of Ice Rescue.

Public present:

1. Call to order.

Dave Aslyn, Vice Chair called the meeting of the Winter Transportation Committee to order on Monday, June 8, 2015 at 10:00am. A quorum of the committee is present as shown by members listed above.

2. Election of Officer(s).

The Chair and Vice Chair positions are open.

Motion by Steve Dunn to nominate Dave Aslyn as Chair, second, G. Russell. All in favor, all aye, no opposed. Motion carried.

Motion by Steve Dunn to nominate Gary Russell as Vice Chair, second, J. Patterson. No discussion, all in favor, all aye, no opposed, motion carried.

3. Minutes of the Following Meetings to be Considered for Approval:

A. April 6, 2015.

Motion by Gary Krubsack to approve the April 6, 2015 Winter Transportation Committee minutes as presented, second, Steve Dunn. All in favor, 1 abstention (Jim Patterson) no opposed, motion carried.

4. Regional Ice Rescue.

Pete Clark, former Town Administrator, after conversations with some regional agencies drew up a map showing Ice Rescue boundaries.

Arnie said he has talked to Town Board members in regards to a fee schedule so when Bayfield County, Ashland County or the Coast Guard calls out La Pointe Ice Rescue there will be reimbursement to the Town of La Pointe. These are high maintenance machines run in dangerous conditions by members of the Fire Department. The windsleds were purchased with a grant for the Island and Bayfield and the immediate area; to take on additional responsibility for Chequamegon Bay, Oak Island, Sand Bay or Cornucopia was not the original intent. The Park Service, Coast Guard, and Ashland County have windsleds on trailers ready to go in those areas. Jay said the expanded role of Ice Rescue happened in the last year or two. Dan Clark, Chief Deputy, Bayfield County has spearheaded ice rescue conversations and said Ashland or La Pointe and usually La Pointe ends up responding, depending on the location of the call. Other

agencies with equipment and abilities have not been able to effectively respond to calls as much as they would like because of equipment failure or the ability to get to the patient quickly. Our sleds are on the ice, ready to go.

Gary Krubsack said Bayfield County might think that these are Fire Department Windsleds, which they are not. That is why we need to come up with a fee schedule when the sleds are used for rescue.

Arnie said Ice Rescue had two false alarms last year, one at night, and one during the day and no reimbursement for costs. He would like to know - 1. Is Bayfield County responsible when a citizen from Bayfield calls in an ice rescue to the dispatcher? 2. How far will we go? If another agency's sled breaks down and we are at Long Island, or if the Ashland sled breaks down heading to Houghton Point, of course we go, but should La Pointe be the first one? We should be the backup, not first on the scene. Jay said the concept of this map is that Ashland will respond to calls between Washburn and Ashland. Ashland will tone us out for every call just in case something goes wrong. Arnie said if La Pointe gets toned out to Bear Island, who is the backup? Jay said Ashland. Arnie said this is the Park Service's area so La Pointe should be the backup to the Park Service sled. The agencies need to realize La Pointe is not a County wide windsled. The La Pointe tax base is paying for these sleds.

Agreement by all that we need to get paid for Ice Rescue.

Discussion of the Frog Bay tone out. Jay said that is a perfect example of the extent of our range and also brought up the question of how to determine if a call is an all go. Do we stop at some point and wait for a confirmation? Putting the crew at risk is a concern. The Frog Bay tone out was over very rough ice for a long distance in the dark. Resources are expensive and valuable. Sending the crews and windsleds out on a goose chase could eventually put a crew in danger and ruin a machine, which could take us out for the rest of the season. This has to be addressed.

Arnie suggested the Fire Dept might want to set up another meeting with the agencies listed on the correspondence from Pete Clark or the Fire Dept could talk to the Town Board first. Arnie had given the Town Board prices a couple of years ago as to what he thought the windsleds and crews could charge. Those prices need to be updated.

Agreement that a Standard Operating Guideline (SOG) is needed first. The Fire Dept also needs to determine what constitutes a reason to go. Grandma saw lights on the ice but now the lights are not there? Agencies have to do more work to confirm call-outs. Rick said we were part way on the Frog Bay call when we realized there was no one in the water. We could have stopped and called it off but we were out there. Our SOG has to determine when to terminate a call.

Arnie said that is not your job; that decision lies with Bayfield or Ashland County who need to do their due diligence to say, this is legit – respond - and they will know there will be a fee.

Dave Aslyn said once the Fire Dept talks to the Town Board, the Fire Dept can sit down with all the agencies and say, here is what we can do; here is area on the map we will cover and this is what it is going to cost to call us out. Jay said he thinks the agencies are on board with this.

Arnie said once the Fire Dept has an SOG you can go to the Town Board. The Town Board would then set compensation by way of a Resolution or a Memorandum of Understanding so when you meet with the regional agencies you would have a resolution from the Town Board showing that you will get X for startup and X for the sled and crew. There are different sleds and different crews so there will be a different compensation for each. That has to come from the Town Board.

Consensus for next steps: Fire Dept will work up an SOG to present to the Town Board.

5. Discussion of 2015 – 2016 Winter Transportation Season – including budget, training, equipment, buildings and maintenance.

Arnie said there were very few leaks in the Big Sled and the Husky has a couple of dings that will be fixed at the Marina. The floorboards will be pulled in the Big Sled to check to see if welding is needed. An extra set of bearings is needed for the Husky. A radiator is needed for the Nelson Sled. Agreement to use the approximate \$761.00 remaining in the Designated Fund for start-up next season.

6. Grant Funding Opportunities.

Lisa Potswald talked to Sheri Walz, WI Dept of Transportation (DOT) and Chad Reuter of the Harbor Assistance Program (HAP). Grant money is tight. The Rural Transportation program could be cut and the Federal Ferry Boat program is in the same situation. The Federal Ferry Boat program also requires that the windsleds be declared ferry boats in order to be eligible for funding. HAP money is also tight.

The Transportation Alternative Program is an option - Ashland County receives as an entitlement for this but Ashland County would have to turn over the money to La Pointe. This is the same with Bayfield County.

The committee is looking at approximately \$500,000 for replacement windsleds.

Lisa will contact our legislators to see about funding possibilities.

Dave Aslyn said the committee is well into the preliminary timeline. Securing funding is a big part of the timeline so we need to get a sense of where we sit after the legislative session. Lisa said she will send out a memo when she finds out any information.

7. Schedule Next Meeting and Set Agenda.

Next meeting scheduled for Monday, October 12, 2015.

Motion by Dave Aslyn to adjourn, second, Steve Dunn. All in favor, all aye, motion carried.

Minutes adjourned at approximately 10:30am.

Minutes taken by recorder and respectfully submitted by Kathy Erickson, Clerical Assistant.

Minutes approved as presented October 12, 2015